

Ser. 217⁽¹²⁾

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Diet

Diet and cultivated plants of Pilansberg area.

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Millet

White mealies

Red mealies

Sweet reed

4 Beans

5

Ground nuts

Peas

Kaffir marrows

White beans

Pumpkins

Water melons

1. In kaffir corn we eat the seeds and not the reeds. Kaffir corn is ground by means of stamping blocks and grinding stones. It is ground into meal and porridge is then cooked. Sometimes the husks are removed by the stamping process and the kaffir corn is then boiled. This is called "musuthane", (boiled kaffir corn which has been stamped). Kaffir beer is also made out of kaffir corn. Kaffir corn is used chiefly in making porridge and beer. Boiled kaffir corn and the boiled, stamped kaffir corn are not often used.

2. As for sweet reed, we suck the juice out of the reeds whilst it is green, we do not eat the grain. Sometimes the grain of sweet reed is used to make beer, but this not a matter of common occurrence.

It is only here and there that you may find people making beer from sweet reed seed.

3. Mealies is used for making porridge. It is crushed in the stamping block like kaffir corn. Sometimes it is eaten as boiled mealies, and at other times it is stamped to make samp mealies and it is then mixed with either ground nuts or beans. We did not have mealies before. Our knowledge of it was brought about by the advent of the Europeans. This accounts for the fact that we do not make beer out of it. Today however we make "Mageu",

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although not very often. We make porridge or bread from it and we also eat it as boiled mealies. The stalks of mealies are not eaten, it is only the seed from which food is made.

4. As for ground nuts and peas, the leaves and the plants are not eaten. It is the seed which is cooked and eaten. Ground nuts cause constipation if too much of them are consumed. They are sometimes cooked together with mealies. Of the white beans, we eat the seeds and the leaves. We make vegetable food. The leaves are cut off whilst they are green and cooked. They are also pounded and spread in the sun so as to be eaten in summer.

Beer is never made from beans. The husks are either removed after cooking and before eating or they are just boiled and eaten.

5. Kaffir melons are eaten raw, sometimes they are cooked and stirred together with mealie meal to make porridge. In most cases, they are cut into slices to make dried fruit, and sometimes they are sliced and cooked at the same time.

We eat pumpkins as well as the leaves whilst they are green. We make vegetable food from them which are nicer than those made the leaves of beans.

Water melons are not cooked, they are eaten raw.

As for sweet potatoes, we eat the bulbs and not the leaves. They were also unknown to us until after the coming of the Europeans.

The food which makes people to be fat is that which is made from beans and ground nuts. You will find a person who eats them being well developed and contented. Kaffir corn and mealies also develop the body, but they do not come near the ground nuts and beans. A person who has eaten ground nuts and beans does not get a desire for meat. He is contented. If taken too much they cause constipation. A sufficient quantity must be taken otherwise one finds fault with oneself for consuming them to excess.

People like them when a number of them eat together. When cultivating the lands, ground nuts and beans are not left out. A large piece of ground is reserved for sowing them.

Kgane These are eaten even if there is famine.

Tshoge They are to be procured at all times

Merula throughout the year. Some of them are eaten once a year beginning from summer to autumn. When winter begins, the bear no more fruit. As for kgane and tshoge, we eat the roots. They have large bulbs underneath the ground. Kgane roots are eaten without being cooked. They are not eaten by everybody. There are people who do not like them and they cause them to vomit. Some prefer this and others that. These roots are known to all, men, women and children. There is no permission sought from the chief or kraal heads for eating them.

Merula: (wild plum). The nuts are eaten, in summer whilst it is green and before its fruits are dry. Very nice beer is made from it, beer that is as sweet as the lemonade of the Europeans. It nuts are spread in the sun until summer. The shells are then crushed and the inside is eaten. The marrow is eaten and it is very nice. People sometimes make a vegetable stew with it.

Mupudu These are also wild plants which
Mokee excel the other that have been
Mopyane mentioned in their sweetness.
Mohlatsoa One feels satisfied after eating them
Moshabele and one never likes to have any more
Moretloa food because one's stomach is full. Beer is
 sometimes made from the Moshabele plant. The roots are crushed in stamping blocks and mixed with water.

Milk.

We usually drink milk before it becomes sour and we also mix porridge with it. Everybody is free to drink milk, if he desires it he is supplied. In most cases we use milk just as the Europeans use tea or coffee.

To make sour milk, it is poured into small clay pots or skin sacks. Sour milk is given to adults as well as children. There are however, people who do not drink milk. It either makes them sick or it causes them to vomit.

Most people drink sour milk as well as fresh milk. People who do not own cattle go to work for those who possess them to get milk.

When strangers arrive at a place, if there is sour milk they are supplied with it. Sour milk quenches the thirst. Infant children are not given sour milk, they get fresh milk. They are given sour milk when they are able to walk and to speak, when they are already two years of age. When milk is turned into sour milk a small hut is built for it behind the hut which is occupied by the family. It is there where the milk is kept. At the cattle posts, a special place for the preservation of milk is built, a little distance away from where the people live. The idea is to keep away the flies from molesting them. At the cattle posts, a special man or boy who is particularly clean and tidy takes care of the milk. His milk is clean and it is without flies or dirt.

He must know how to separate the whey, so that his milk remains thick. You will then know that he is smart and active. A woman must also be tidy or her milk will not be clean and people will not like it.

Toane Kau.

Meat.

We eat the meat of cattle, wild animals, guinea fowls, partridges and birds. It is eaten only by the strong. A beast is eaten, only when it is dead. It is slaughtered only for wedding feasts or some other important function. Otherwise we wait until one dies and then we eat it. It may be seen long after it is dead, decomposed and full of worms, yet it is eaten. It cannot be thrown away. The proverb says, "the grave of a beast is the mouth". The meat of wild animals is eaten only by strong men who do not get tired of hunting. If a man is lazy, he cannot expect to get meat. The duty of a man therefore is to hunt and to herd cattle. Meat is either cooked or roasted just as the people desire.

The distribution of meat.

1. The eldest male child is given the shoulder.
2. The second male child is given the hind leg.
3. The girls are given the placental.
4. The maternal uncle is given the head
5. Mother and father get the
6. The owner of the beast gets the brisket and udder.
7. The stomach and intestines are put together and are given to the men and boys of the family.

This method of distributing the meat accounts for the fear the people have for slaughtering their cattle. Consequently they have to wait until a beast dies of its own accord before getting meat. Even then, they are bound to distribute the meat. The chief is not given anything, he eats the meat of his own cattle. He is only given by the people of his own family just as he does also when he happens to slaughter a beast.

Joel Tonne.

Honey.

People are very fond of honey. You will find them discussing various methods of discovering them. The first person to sight them becomes the owner. If he is in company with others, he will give them just as he pleases.

He takes the remaining honey home. The old men are very fond of honey. They make honey beer from it. If one gets honey and gives it to the old men, they will like him very much. Honey is eaten by anyone who likes it. A person may not eat honey, but if he has discovered it, he is the owner of it. He may give it to anyone he prefers. People who are fond of honey know a certain bird which leads them to the bees' nest. They call it the honey bird. When they have taken out the honey they must leave some for it. If they fail to do so, it will lead them to where a large snake or a leopard is. Honey is eaten just as it is, nothing is mixed with it.

Some people do not eat honey, they get stomachache. Some get sick and it causes them to vomit.

No one is forced to eat honey if he does not like it. There are people who are experts in taking honey out of the bees' nest. Some people are afraid of the bees. If a person who is afraid of the bees discovers their nest, he goes to one who is not afraid of them and asks him to take the honey out for him. If a person finds and eats the honey which has been discovered by someone else, the owner will kill him. Upon discovering a bees' nest, the discoverer either places a stone at the hole or he pitches a peg nest to it. The next person who comes across it will then know that it belongs to someone else. If he eats the honey, he must make the veld his home or he will be permanently maimed.

Titus Rathebe

Insects.

Locusts	Flying ants, moths and worms,
Flying ants	are eaten in summer when the
Moths	first rains begin to fall. You
Caterpillars	will then see the flying ants and

moths coming out of the ground. The women and children gather them up. When they have been collected, they are roasted in fragments of broken clay pots and they are eaten with porridge. Some people do not eat them, they give them the creeps and cause them to vomit.

Most people like them and they eat them together with other food. They are sometimes eaten raw, especially the flying ants. The moths are eaten only when roasted. People do not like them if they are not roasted.

The locusts are eaten the whole year round. They are migratory and they make their appearance they come in great numbers. People gather them and cook them. They are then dried and stored away in corn bins to be eaten later when the rest of the locust has migrated.

The young locust is collected by boys and girls. Grown up persons get tired of running to and fro to catch them. Men do not worry themselves to catch them.

It is the women who know where the worms are to be found.

Sometimes they sleep in the veld when hunting them. They are gathered off the trees. When they have collected a large quantity, they go away to cook them and spread them. Now and then, they are eaten with other food. Although some people eat them, they are afraid of them when they are alive. Others do not eat them, they give them the creeps, and cause them to vomit.

A great many people eat them, others like them so much so that they will not give them to the children.

Kobe Tsoeu

Meals.

We eat twice a day, in the morning and in the evening. The men eat together at the "Kgotla". Women do not eat together because they have their meals in the "lalapla". The boys and the men have their meals at the Kgotla, the boys eat together out of one dish and the men likewise. Children eat by themselves in the "malapa" of their mothers. Perridge dished out into small dishes. Whatever there is to accompany it is mixed with it, it may be gravy, it may be anything, it is also added to it. You will find three men sometimes eating together out of one dish.

Before commencing to eat, water is bought for the people to wash their hands. They have to wash them again after meals. They have spoons to eat with. They use their hands to eat meat, in order to be able to pick the bits of meat from the bones.

Water is taken to the men at the kgotla in the horn of an ox. Every woman who takes food to her husband must first carry water to the kgotla before she takes the food. People do not speak a lot when having their meals and they must not stand up every now and then. They must remain seated until they have finished eating. After that they can resume their conversation and stand about. If anyone makes a noise, he is scolded, he is impolite and lacks manners.

Thibedi Thebe.

Beer.

Before beer is cooked, kaffir corn is put in water to germinate. When thoroughly soaked, it is taken out and placed

in clay pots and covered. After it has germinated, it is taken out and spread out in the sun. When dry, it is ground. Other kaffir corn which is not malt is also ground. Water is then cooked in fairly large pots. When it is boiling the meal is poured into a large clay pot and boiling water is added to it. This is the process of fermenting beer. The next day beer porridge is cooked, and the day after, straining takes place. The cooking of beer is then accomplished. It is emptied into various smaller pots. The head of the family is given his pot, the children of the family get theirs if there are who drink. Those who do not drink get nothing.

The pot which belongs to the kgotla is filled and taken there. When the men drink they have a special man who serves them with the beer. The first drinking bowl that is filled which contains the foam is given to the eldest man and the last goes to the one next to him in age. A person who entertains a stranger with beer drinks the first drinking vessel that is filled, in the stranger's presence. By so doing, he indicates that there is nothing evil in the beer. The beer which the people drink is made from kaffir corn and Morula (a species of wild plum).

Kaffir corn beer excels that of the Morula. The Morula beer only quenches the thirst whereas kaffir corn beer is a stimulant to the heart and body. There is also what is known as kgadi (honey comb beer). It is also very nice, but kaffir corn beer is the best.

Ranama Keebu

Hemp. (Tobacco)

We did not have tobacco originally. We saw it for the first time when the Europeans arrived in this country. We also did not know dagga until after the arrival of the Europeans and Indians here. Today we know tobacco, we know how to sow its seed, we smoke it, we snuff it and we suck it through the nose. It is not everybody can grind snuff. There are people who know how to grind it and there are people who do not know. Tobacco is planted by men. When it begins to blossom, the seed is cut off and stored away. In summer, the plants are planted, and during the rainy season they are transplanted again on ploughed ground. When

tobacco has been reaped, the leaves are hung up in the huts. It must be taken off from there for the purpose of grinding. We do not all grow tobacco. A few people here and there grow it and we buy it from them in exchange for fowls and kaffir corn.

Ntoko Masiangoako

Fish.

Some people eat fish while others do not. They say they are snakes. We did not know them before. We got to know them on the arrival of the Europeans amongst us. We always saw them, but we did not know that they were eaten. We ate them after we saw the Europeans eating them. That is why only a few natives eat fish. There is no prohibition as far as the eating of fish is concerned. Anybody is free to eat fish if he so desires. Fish are caught with the hands but people also killed them with their assegais. After they have been caught, they are eaten all at once and nothing is left over. That is how they are eaten.

RM/

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